



NEWS RELEASE

Immediate Release

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MATA Awarded \$4.7 Million in Federal CMAQ Awards for Five Transit Projects

Four projects expand bus service to employment centers near the airport and Wolfchase

MEMPHIS, Tennessee, August 7, 2015 – The Memphis Area Transit Authority (MATA) today announced that it has been awarded five Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) awards from the Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT) for expanding bus service to employment centers in the metro area and for improved customer experiences. The CMAQ awards total \$4,752,000 and represent 80 percent of the five projects projected costs. CMAQ awards are administered by TDOT, but funded through the Federal Government. The additional 20 percent, \$1,188,000 in funds comes from a required local matches already committed or pledged to be secured by the City of Memphis.

“The awarding of the funds from the Federal CMAQ program is a great endorsement of the work MATA has proposed to better connect educational and residential areas of the city with growing business centers for retail, distribution and commercial business,” said Ron Garrison, MATA President and General Manager. “From the City support and investment for us to qualify for the awards, to the input that we receive from our bus riders, we are able to focus on projects like these that make a difference for current riders and expand opportunities for others to utilize MATA services.”

Garrison points out that the initiatives being funded from the awards assist in meeting the goals of the MATA Short Range Transit Plan. The bus service grants will cover costs for 3 years.

Additionally, the projects to be funded are a major objective included in Mayor Wharton’s Blueprint for Prosperity which calls for reducing poverty by providing public transit options to get people to and from jobs located outside of their communities.

“These funds are a significant opportunity for us to get people in the inner city to jobs out east and around the airport area,” Mayor Wharton said. “It’s a good step in the right direction towards lowering the cost of living for the poor and providing access to greater opportunities for employment. I am pleased that MATA is doing what it can to expand services where they can have a major impact.”

Specifically, the Awards are as follows:

Project Name	Project Cost	CMAQ 80% Federal Share	20% Local Match
Central Station Phase 2 Redevelopment	\$3,000,000	\$2,400,000	\$600,000
Wolfchase Connector	\$495,000	\$396,000	\$99,000
Airways Transit Center Express	\$420,000	\$336,000	\$84,000
Getwell Connector	\$1,110,000	\$888,000	\$222,000
Airport Shuttle Express	\$915,000	\$732,000	\$183,000
Totals	\$5,940,000	\$4,752,000	\$1,188,000

Central Station Redevelopment Phase 2 – Funding for the public infrastructure improvements at Central Station to improve the multimodal functionality of the project and increase the utilization of transit, biking, and walking as alternative modes of transportation. Major components will include a new trolley station, transit connector concourse, and other pedestrian and bike-friendly streetscape improvements.

Wolfchase Connector – A new bus route that will connect employers in the Appling Farms area and educational institutions such as Southwest Tennessee Community College with Shelby Farms and retailers in the Wolfchase Mall area. The new route will connect educational, multi-family, and employment areas adjacent to the northwest corner of Shelby Farms with retail and restaurant establishments. The southwestern terminus of the route will connect the Greenline park-n-ride that was funded through the previous CMAQ competition.

Airways Transit Center Express – A new express service that will connect downtown Memphis with the American Way Transit Center, Greyhound intercity buses and major employers near the Memphis International Airport. The new route will provide residents living in the city with a direct express connection to the region’s largest employment area. The route is included in MATA’s Short Range Transit Plan.

Getwell Connector – A new route connecting educational, multi-family residences, and major employers in the southeast Memphis area with the Airways Transit Center. The route will allow transferring passengers connecting from downtown Memphis at the American Way Transit Center to get to major employers in the airport area and southeast portion of Memphis where large distribution centers and employers are located. This route will serve a vital role in connecting inner city residents to employment opportunities in suburban distribution centers in southeast Memphis.

Airport Shuttle Express – The new route will connect and provide direct express service between the Airways Transit Center, American Way Transit Center and Memphis International Airport. Some trips may also serve educational institutions and employers in the Nonconnah Corporate Center. This express/shuttle service will connect key corridor bus routes along Lamar

Avenue and Airways Blvd. These connections will improve access of inner city residents with major employers in the airport area. It will provide transit customers the opportunity to transfer at either transit center and improve connections to other routes serving the area. This route is included in MATA's Short Range Transit Plan.

In its applications for the CMAQ Awards, MATA stressed initiatives that will add or expand transit service along key commuting corridors, including areas not currently served by existing transit service. Expanding transit service improves air quality and reduces congestion by increasing transit ridership and reducing vehicle trips. New bus routes can make transit a viable alternative to the personal automobile, while reducing vehicle trips reduces air emissions, saves fuel costs and decreases congestion levels.

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